

Day.

With silent feet Night walks the way,  
All silver-paved by shining stars,  
But, oh, how swift, when nears the day,  
She hides behind Morn's golden bars.

Then hark the little birds awake,  
Four flocks of song upon the air,  
And blossoms fuller perfume shake  
From dew-bathed petals everywhere.

Day smiles, the sun pours forth his light,  
Growth walks abroad, unhindered, free,  
And golden glory fills the sight,  
And, oh, how sweet it is to be!

To be, in God's great world of sun,  
In God's great world of night and stars;  
Then, for when time for us is done,  
Death endless life's wide gate unbars.  
—Los Angeles Times.

## At Catfish Crossing

It was a rainy day at Catfish Crossing. Quite a few of the Crossing's most voracious citizens were in session at Grimsol's grocery. Those meetings at Grimsol's grocery are never in executive session. They are open and above board. Any one may sit by and hear them. Frequently strangers who are passing through, whether traveling for pleasure or going on across into Jersey, tarry a while at Grimsol's grocery. If there is a session of Crossing citizens on, these strangers will necessarily pause and listen. And often a look and a listen will inspire some one of them to throw in a little thing of his own on the subject in hand, or perhaps on some other subject.

On this particular rainy day at Catfish Crossing the visiting stranger at Grimsol's grocery was a tall man with a blue umbrella and a large Roman nose. The expression of his face was amiable, but his trousers were very short. He looked like a man who would tell the truth if it was necessary, but the shade of his nose was prima facie evidence that he had never been overprompt in saying "No." An ordinary listener to the proceedings of this session at the grocery might have been wise enough to suggest affidavits as appropriate things to go with what he heard, but this visiting stranger gave every outward evidence of entire confidence in the credibility of the session; seemed as firmly fixed in his belief in it as he was in his belief that the big pitcher at the far end of the counter had cider in it.

A lull having come in the proceedings, the stranger spoke and said: "I see you use pine sawdust for beddin' down your horses over here, and there ain't nothin' better."

Squire Bliduff, who sat on the wood-box, said no, there wasn't. "There ain't no doubt, neither," continued the stranger, "that this here egg forcin' meal some one has conjured up for makin' hens lay whether they want to or not is built on the right idea."

Old 'Bijer Crump, from the cracker barrel, said there wasn't no kind o' doubt of it, 'cause he had tried it. "But let me warn you!" said the stranger. "Beware o' nigh-sighted hired men!"

This made everybody prick up his ears and look around a little queer; but Sugar-tooth Bill Fritchey, sitting on the nail keg, cracked two or three of his fingers and said:

"Yes."

"Yes!" exclaimed the stranger, hunching himself up on the counter and glancing longingly down at the



The stranger.

pitcher at the other end. "Well, I should say it was yes! Go ask Uncle David Breckendarter! Go over to the vale o' Pochuck, if you want to know, and ask Uncle David Breckendarter!" Nobody got up to go, and the stranger resumed:

"Uncle David Breckendarter," said he, "keeps swads o' chickens. Swads

of 'em. Not so long ago he read in the paper about this here egg forcin' meal to make hens lay whether they wanted to or not, and he sent and got a big lot of it. Then, about that time, Job Jeffers, who'd been hired man for Uncle David for three years, took it in his head that he'd like to see more o' the world than he thought he could get a glimpse of in the sweet vale o' Pochuck, and so he hired out to a man down at Sprout Hill. But it happened that another chap comes along lookin' for work just about then, and Uncle David hired him. He was a willin' hand and a worker, but when it was too late Uncle David discovered that he had one bad fault. He was almost nigh-sighted enough to play the fiddle and be led by a dog.

"Uncle David told the new man about feedin' chickens and beddin' the horses, and he pitched into work. 'Twa'n't long before Uncle David got to wonderin' why he see the beddin' so slim in the horses' stalls when he went out to the barn mornin's, and he says to the man:

"'Beddin' these hosses reg'lar?"

"'Yes, sure!' the man says.

"'Sawdust?' says Uncle David.

"'Every night,' says the man.

"'It's extraordinary singular where they kick it to,' says Uncle David, and he hitched up and went over to the choppin' after a load o' wood.

"It went along and it went along, and then Uncle David discovered somethin' that made him stare and ponder. He found the hosses was pullin' their hay out o' the mangers and twistin' it around in the sing-larest kind of a way on the floor. Makin' reg'lar nests out of it, so it seemed, and you might say squattin' in 'em.

"'Pears to me like as if these ding hosses o' mine must be goin' crazy,' says Uncle David. 'Kickin' their sawdust beddin' out o' sight and makin' their own beddin' out o' the hay they ought to be eatin'!' he says. 'What ails you, anyhow?' he says to 'em, and had hard work to make 'em come out and be hitched.

"While Uncle David was hitchin' o' 'em, givin' 'em a dig and a kick every now and then, and I'm afeared cussin' a little, he was so all-consumin' mad at 'em for the queer ways they had fell into, Aunt Sally come to the kitchen door.

"'David!' she hollers to him.

"'What?' Uncle David hollers back.

"'I've been gatherin' the eggs!'

Aunt Sally hollers.

"'Well,' Uncle David hollers back.

"'There ain't no law ag'in it, is there?'

"'No,' hollers Aunt Sally. 'But come and see 'em. They skeer me.'

"'So Uncle David, grumblin' and growlin', went to the house to see what sort o' capers the eggs was cuttin' up.

"'There!' says Aunt Sally, p'intin' to a dozen or two of eggs in a basin on the table. 'Them's 'em. What has struck 'em?' she says.

"'The eggs was as yaller, most, as a sunflower, and had a grain in 'em like a board.

"'Sally,' says Uncle David, starin' at 'em a minute. 'They're wood, ain't they?'

"'Pears to me so,' says Aunt Sally. 'Then Uncle David took a hammer, and after hittin' one o' the eggs a couple o' hard whacks, it split, and, sure enough, the shell was wood, and thick, at that, with not a thing where the yolk ought to been but a little pine knot! And that's the way they all was. Uncle David looked at Aunt Sally, and Aunt Sally looked at Uncle David. Then somethin' seemed to break in onto Uncle David's mind, and he just jumped and hollered.

"'Great rocks a-bustin'!' he hollers, 'Where's that hired man?'

Uncle David rushed out and met the hired man comin' from the barn.

"'Here!' he says to him, grabbin' him by the arm. 'What's aillin' o' you? Can't you see?'

"'And then the hired man up and told him.

"'No,' he says. 'I can't see partic'lar good, 'cause I'm about as nigh-sighted as they make 'em,' he says.

"'And you've been beddin' the hosses down with that egg forcin' meal instead o' pine sawdust, and stuffin' the hens with pine sawdust instead o' egg forcin' meal!' Uncle David, hollers, jumpin' and cussin'. 'And the hosses has eat that beddin' till they've took to makin' nests out o' their hay, and the hens has been stuffin' themselves with sawdust till they're laying wooden eggs!'

"Then Uncle David discharged the nigh-sighted man on the spot, and I've dropped in here jest a purpose to warn you ag'in—"

Grimsol rose from the pile of calico he was rolling on and walked, with a yawn, to where the pitcher sat. Squire Bliduff, Old 'Bijer' and Sugarlip Bill Fritchey followed him. The benevolent stranger looked and listened for any sound or sign that might indicate that he was expected to follow, too. None came. He slipped from the counter and exclaimed:

"You are a cold, ungrateful and doubtin' generation over here in Pennsylvania! That's what you are! I'll bet a farm, by cats! that when Gabriel comes and blows his horn he'll have to whack you over the head with it before you'll believe it's him!"

The stranger went out, and Squire Bliduff, remarking that if that Jerseyman had lived in the days of Ananias and Sapphira, Ananias and Sapphira wouldn't have met with that sudden death, sat down and proceeded to tell, in circumstantial detail, how he had killed four deer at one shot once, and the gun was loaded so heavy it kicked him over; and how, in falling, he threw up his hands just as two wild turkeys were flying over, both of which he caught by the legs; and how he never knew until he got



"Uncle David took a hammer—" up that he had fallen on three rabbits and killed them.—Ed Mott in Philadelphia Ledger.

### ILLUSION WELL KEPT UP.

Midshipman's Self-Sacrifice a Matter of Wonder.

In "Reminiscences of the Old Navy" is related an amusing incident of a visit of the United States ship Preble to Port Mahon in 1842. At a fancy dress ball one of the midshipmen went attired as an old boot. He had ingeniously contrived a tolerably fair imitation of a boot out of barrel hoops and canvas. Getting into it, he managed to hold it up by means of straps, the sole resting on rollers, while a couple of slight holes cut near the top of the leg enabled him to navigate the ballroom and steer clear of posts and wall flowers. He did not dance in costume, although he made brave efforts to induce some fair woman to accept him—the excuse being that his foot was too large. The most remarkable thing about this midshipman, however, and the topic that was most widely discussed was the fact that he refused to allow his identity to become known. This became simply marvelous when refreshments were served. Wine flowed like water and a delicious sausage, called sobenados, made exclusively by the Mahonese, were offered unstintingly. The fortitude of this midshipman in refusing, or, rather, being unable to eat or drink was widely commented upon and aroused the sympathies of the other guests. Finally some of the ladies and gentlemen insisted on pouring wine into the peepholes of the boot and then thrusting sausages into the same apertures, having a vague idea that somehow or other the drink and food might reach the self-denying prisoner within and he could drink the wine and munch the sobenados in his calm though somewhat heated retreat. There seems to have been no question about the wine reaching him—although probably not in a drinkable way—but the sausages stuffed into the peepholes completely cut off his line of vision. His hands were engaged in holding up the straps, so he endeavored to tear the sausages out with his teeth. But they were strong and resisted all his efforts to pull in or push out, so that he was compelled to heave to under short sail and flounder around the ballroom very much like a ship without a rudder.

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